

CLAIMS

1. A liferaft system comprising a container (10) containing an inflatable liferaft (24) in a hermetically sealed first bag (23) and an emergency pack (29) outside the first bag (23) and connected to the liferaft (24), the container (10) being operable to allow deployment of the liferaft (24) and including a closable aperture (33) through which the emergency pack (29) can be removed and replaced.
2. A system according to claim 1 wherein the sealed first bag (23) contains an inflation system (25, 26) for the liferaft (10).
3. A system according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the emergency pack (29) is in a second bag (30), the second bag (30) being connected to the liferaft (24) and being openable to allow removal and replacement of the emergency pack (29).
4. A system according to any one of claim 1 to 3 wherein the container (10) is cylindrical with an outer wall of generally circular cross-section and ends closed by respective end walls (14, 15), said hatch (33) being formed in an end wall (14).
5. A system according to claim 4 wherein the closable aperture is formed by a hatch (33) comprising a generally planar member releasably fixed to the remainder of the

container (10).

6. A system according to claim 5 wherein the hatch (33) is the shape of a segment of a circle.

7. A system according to claim 4 or claim 5 wherein the hatch (33) is connected to the remainder of the container by threaded bolts (36).

8. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the container (10) has an interior, the interior being divided into first and second compartments, the first compartment containing the hermetically sealed first bag (23) and the second compartment containing the emergency pack (29).

9. A system according to claim 8 wherein the first compartment is formed in a lower portion of the container (10) and the second compartment in an upper portion of the container (10).

10. A system according to claim 9 wherein the interior of the container (10) is divided into said first and second compartments by a divider (32) resting on the hermetically sealed bag (23), the emergency pack (29) resting on the divider (32).

11. A system according to claim 10 wherein the divider is formed by at least

one panel (32) resting on the hermetically sealed bag (23).

12. A system according to any one of claims 8 to 11 wherein the second compartment includes a second emergency pack (28) connected to the liferaft (24) so that, upon inflation of the liferaft (24), the second emergency pack (28) is automatically drawn into the liferaft (24).

13. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 12 wherein the hermetically sealed first bag (23) includes a device (27) for indicating humidity in the hermetically sealed first bag (23), the device (27) being visible from the exterior of the container (10).

14. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 13 wherein the emergency pack (29) is so connected to the liferaft (24) that, upon inflation of the liferaft (24) the emergency pack (29) is automatically drawn into the liferaft (24).

15. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 14 wherein the container (10) is formed by two half-shells (11,12) the half-shells (11, 12) being separable to open the container (10) for deployment of the liferaft (24).

16. A method of servicing a liferaft system comprising a container (10) containing an inflatable liferaft (24) in a hermetically sealed bag (23) and an

emergency pack (29) outside the first bag and connected to the liferaft (24), the method comprising accessing the emergency pack (29) through a hatch (33) in the container (10), removing the emergency pack through the hatch (33), inserting a replacement emergency pack through the hatch (33) into the container and connecting the replacement emergency pack to the liferaft (24).

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 22 July 2004 (22.07.04);
original claims 1, 4, 7 and 16 amended;
remaining claims unchanged (3 pages)]

1. A liferaft system comprising a container (10) containing an inflatable liferaft (24) in a hermetically sealed first bag (23) and an emergency pack (29) connected to the liferaft (24) so that, upon inflation of the liferaft (24), the emergency pack (29) is automatically drawn into the liferaft (24), the container (10) being separable to allow deployment of the liferaft (24) and including a hatch (33) through which the emergency pack to be removed and replaced.
2. A system according to claim 1 wherein the sealed bag (23) includes an inflation system (25, 26) for the liferaft.
3. A system according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the emergency pack (29) is in a second bag (30), the second bag (30) being connected to the liferaft (24) and being openable to allow removal and replacement of the emergency pack (29).
4. A system according to any one of claim 1 to 3 wherein the container (10) is cylindrical with an outer wall of generally circular cross-section and ends closed by respective end walls (14, 15), said hatch (33) being formed in an end wall (14).
5. A system according to claim 4 wherein the hatch comprises a generally planar member (33) releasably fixed to the remainder of the container (10).

6. A system according to claim 5 wherein the hatch (33) is the shape of a segment of a circle.
7. A system according to claim 4 or claim 5 wherein the hatch (33) is connected to the remainder of the container by threaded bolts (36).
8. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the container (10) has an interior, the interior being divided into first and second compartments, the first compartment containing the hermetically sealed bag (23) and the second compartment containing the emergency pack (29).
9. A system according to claim 8 wherein the first compartment is formed in a lower portion (12) of the container and the second compartment in an upper portion (11) of the container.
10. A system according to claim 9 wherein the interior of the container is divided into said first and second compartments by a divider (32) resting on the hermetically sealed bag (23), the emergency pack (29) resting on the divider (32).
11. A system according to claim 10 wherein the divider is formed by at least one panel (32) resting on the hermetically sealed bag (23).

12. A system according to any one of claims 8 to 11 wherein the second compartment includes a second emergency pack (30) connected to the liferaft (24) so that, upon inflation of the liferaft (24), the second emergency pack (30) is automatically drawn into the liferaft (24).

13. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 12 wherein the hermetically sealed bag (23) includes a device (27) for indicating humidity in the hermetically sealed bag, the device (27) being visible from the exterior of the container.

14. A method of servicing a liferaft system comprising a container (10) containing an inflatable liferaft (24) in a hermetically sealed bag (23) and an emergency pack (29) connected to the liferaft (24) so that upon inflation of the liferaft (24), the emergency pack (29) is automatically drawn into the liferaft (24), the method comprising accessing the emergency pack (29) through a hatch (33) in the container (10), removing the emergency pack (29) through the hatch (33), inserting a replacement emergency pack (29) through the hatch (33) into the container (10) and connecting the replacement emergency pack (29) to the liferaft (24).